

Region VI Developmental Disabilities Newsletter



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HELP AMERICA VOTE ACT

On October 29, 2002, President Bush signed the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) into law. The legislation was a bipartisan measure to help states and localities update their voting systems and ensure integrity.

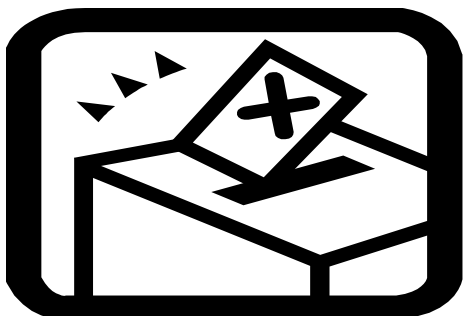
The legislation provides for \$3.9 billion in federal funds to be given to the states over the next three years to replace outdated voting machines, improve voter education and train poll workers. For the 2004 election, states will be required to have a computerized voter registration system and to provide provisional ballots to voters whose names do not appear on voter rolls.

Under this law people registering to vote are required to prove that they are who they say they are, with appropriate identification. First-time voters who register by mail will be asked to provide identification when they cast their ballots. This law also creates new criminal penalties for providing false information, and punishes anyone guilty of conspiracy to deprive voters of a fair election.

Each polling place must have at least one voting machine accessible to persons with disabilities. When people show up at the polls, and their voting registration is in doubt, they should not be turned away, but allowed to cast a provisional ballot so their vote can be counted if it is later verified that they are properly registered.

The Department of Health & Human Services has been assigned its disability-related HAVA responsibilities to the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (\$15 million).

*Adapted from the: Office of International Programs,
U.S. Department of State Site*



LIFE EXPECTANCY STUDY

HHS STUDY FINDS LIFE EXPECTANCY IN THE U.S. ROSE TO 77.2 years in 2001. The Annual Mortality Report also includes a new category for terrorism Homicide Americans' life expectancy hit an all-time high in 2001, while age-adjusted deaths hit an all-time low.

The report from HHS' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) documents that the national age-adjusted death rate decreased slightly from 869 deaths per 100,000 population in 2000 to 855 deaths per 100,000 in 2001.

There were declines in mortality among most racial, ethnic, and gender-groups. Meanwhile, life expectancy hit a new high of 77.2 years in 2001, up from 77 in 2000, and increased for both men and women as well as whites and blacks. For men, life expectancy increased from 74.3 years in 2000 to 74.4 years in 2001; for women, life expectancy increased from 79.7 years to 79.8 years. Record high life expectancies were observed for white men and for both black men and women.

Among leading causes of death, there were declines in mortality from heart disease (nearly 4 percent), cancer (2 percent), stroke (nearly 5 percent), and accidents/unintentional injuries (nearly 2 percent). The biggest decline in mortality among leading causes of death was for influenza/pneumonia (more than 7 percent).

The age-adjusted death rate from HIV/AIDS declined nearly 4 percent between 2000 and 2001, a bigger decline than the year before and continuing a trend that has occurred since 1995. Over this six-year period, mortality from HIV has declined nearly 70 percent after increasing over 191 percent between 1987 and 1994.

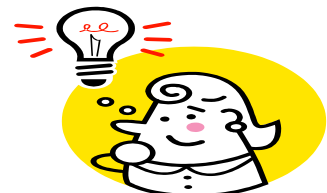
The study can be found at www.cdc.gov/nchs.

*Taken from: HHS Press Release
March 14, 2003*

WHERE IS IT FOUND IN THE DD ACT?

The designated State agency, and any other agency, office or entity of the State, will not interfere with the advocacy, capacity building, systemic change activities, budget, personnel, state plan development, or plan implementation of the Council.

The answer is in this
news letter



DEPARTMENT OF LABOR INVITES NOMINATIONS FOR NEW FREEDOM INITIATIVE

Businesses, non-profit organizations and individuals are invited to submit nominations for the Secretary of Labor's New Freedom Initiative Award, the award recognizes organizations or individuals who have demonstrated exemplary and innovative efforts in furthering President George W. Bush's New Freedom Initiative employment objectives.

The New Freedom Initiative represents a comprehensive set of proposals designed to ensure that Americans with disabilities have the opportunity to learn and develop skills, engage in productive work, make choices about their daily lives, and participate fully in their communities.

Nominees must have developed and implemented a multi-faceted program directed toward increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities through increased access to assistive technologies and use of innovative training, hiring and retention techniques. Self-nominations are encouraged.

Complete eligibility criteria and nomination guidelines were published in the Tuesday, Feb. 18, 2003 issue of the Federal Register and can be accessed at www.dol.gov/odep. Interested persons may also request a copy of the Federal Register notice by writing to the U. S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy, Room S1303, Washington, DC 20210. The deadline for receipt of nominations is May 15, 2003.

*Taken from: DOL News Release
February 19, 2003*

BI-LINGUAL HELPLINE, "SU FAMILIA"

A National Hispanic family health helpline has been created "Su Familia" (866-783-2645 / 866-SU-FAMILIA). Su Familia will help Hispanic families get basic health information to help them prevent and manage chronic conditions, and refer them to local health providers and federally supported programs including the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

Su Familia bilingual information specialists refer callers to one of over 16,000 local health providers, including community and migrant health centers, just by providing the callers' zip code. Callers can also request basic health information, referrals to information sources, or receive consumer-friendly, bilingual Su Familia fact sheets. Fact sheets are currently available for a wide variety of topics including: asthma, cancer screening, cardiovascular disease, child and adult immunizations, diabetes, domestic violence and HIV/AIDS.

Su Familia is supported by HHS' Health Resources and Services Administration and HHS' Office of Minority Health, and was developed and is operated by the National Alliance for Hispanic Health.

The toll-free helpline is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Eastern Time.

*Taken From: HHS Health News
March 13, 2003*

NEW WEB SITE TO GATHER PUBLIC COMMENTS CONCERNING DISABILITY RESEARCH NEEDS

A new Web site has been developed by the Federal government's Interagency Committee on Disability Research (ICDR) to gather comments and recommendations on research needs for people with disabilities. The committee, chaired by Steven James Tingus, Director of the Department of Education's National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR), developed the site to help ensure that Federal research efforts more fully address the needs of people with disabilities. You may visit the site at: <http://www.icdr.us/>

Taken from: CDDC Public Policy Update
March 7, 2003

BUILDING STRONG FAMILIES

One-third of all births in the United States are to unmarried women, and even more in some population groups. Many children of unwed couples flourish, but research shows that on average they are at greater risk than children growing up with their married biological parents of living in poverty and developing social, behavioral and academic problems. Research also shows that most unwed couples are romantically involved at the time of their child's birth and hope and expect to marry each other. Nevertheless, in the absence of any intervention, these aspirations and hopes for a marriage together are seldom realized.

The Building Strong Families (BSF) project is an important opportunity to develop models, work with state and local partners that implement them, and document lessons learned through rigorous program evaluation. The services to families would be designed to provide the knowledge and skills couples need to enter and sustain healthy marriages, address other important issues faced by low-income families (e.g., employment, housing), and improve child and family well-being.

In addition to documenting the design and implementation of the programs and services, the evaluation will document net impacts based random assignment of families to service streams utilizing, primarily, data from surveys administered at 18 and 36 months after entry into the study, with the option for longer term follow-up at 60 months. The contract for the project was awarded to Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. in September 2002. The contract period is through September 2011.

*Taken from: ACF-OPRE News
For 2003*

HHS AWARDS \$2.5 MILLION IN GRANTS

In promoting President Bush's New Freedom Initiative, HHS has announced the awarding of \$2.5 million in grants to five states to help people with disabilities in those states to become and stay competitively employed. Each of the states -- Indiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina -- will receive \$500,000 to support efforts to increase services and supports to workers, as well as help others return to work without the fear of losing health coverage.

HHS has awarded more than \$59 million to 40 states and the District of Columbia to expand their health coverage for disabled workers with disabilities through the Medicaid program. The grants support the goals of President Bush's New Freedom Initiative, which is working to eliminate the many barriers that unnecessarily hinder Americans with disabilities as they seek to participate fully in the life of their communities.

Already through this initiative, nearly 30,000 workers with disabilities have returned to work without losing their health coverage, and the number of states offering expanded health care to these workers continues to grow.

The grants advance the goals of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 (TWWIIA), a law passed by Congress to encourage people with disabilities to work without fear of losing their Medicare, Medicaid, or similar health benefits. The grants will help states build the systems they need to allow individuals with a disability to purchase health coverage through Medicaid at affordable rates. People with a disabling condition often cite the fear of losing health coverage as one of the major barriers to a possible return to work.

The grants can be used to provide personal assistance can include help other activities at home also use the funds to disability, train staff abilities and improve support programs that ability to become productive members of the American workforce.



support systems that provide and supports. Such assistance with bathing, dressing, and or on the job. States can reach out to people with a in new employment possibilities transportation or other low people with a disability

Taken from: HHS Weekly Report

March 2-8, 2003

SSA Offers New Web Resource on Employment Incentives

SSA has launched a new Web page designed to provide information to people with disabilities regarding various work incentives and methods of locating and maintaining employment. The page may be accessed at: <http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/10095.html>

*Taken from: NACDD Public Policy Update
March 28, 2003*

HHS TO SPEND \$150 MILLION TO MENTOR CHILDREN

HHHS will fund \$150 million over the next three years to help more than 100,000 adolescent children of prisoners find an adult mentor.

The \$150 million is part of a \$450 million aid package, and represents \$50 million in HHS' budget for fiscal year 2004, double the fiscal year 2003 president's budget of \$25 million for HHS' Mentoring Children of Prisoners Program. Also, the proposal includes nearly \$300 million through the Department of Education over the next three years to support the development, expansion and strengthening of mentoring programs targeted at disadvantaged middle school students.

Through the mentoring initiative, federal agencies will work with nonprofit, community, and faith-based organizations that train volunteer mentors and pair them with children in need. These programs will further the goals of the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Amendments of 2001 and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which called for the expansion of services to strengthen families, including creating and expanding mentoring programs for children through networks of community organizations, including religious organizations.

*Taken from the: HHS Weekly
Report—2-8-2003*

FY 2003 SCDD AND P&A ALLOCATIONS

State DD Councils

ARKANSAS	\$805,462
LOUISIANA	\$1,358,920
NEW MEXICO	\$514,035
OKLAHOMA	\$914,772
TEXAS	\$4,509,851

Protection & Advocacy Systems

ARKANSAS	\$367,922
LOUISIANA	\$620,599
NEW MEXICO	\$345,429
OKLAHOMA	\$417,943
TEXAS	\$2,060,863

SCDD CONFERENCE CALL

The Region VI Developmental Disabilities Team hosted a conference call with the State Councils on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) to highlight and discuss projects noted in their 2002 Program Performance Reports. There were twelve individuals on the call and eight projects were discussed.

The participants expressed their appreciation for the call, which resulted in ideas for future projects. Participants also provided suggestions for future calls.

The Region VI Developmental Disabilities Team is planning a second conference call for later this fiscal year.

Help prevent child abuse in your community with a new resource packet from the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information and Prevent Child Abuse America. The packet includes a comprehensive manual, CD-ROM, poster, and downloadable calendar of relevant events to help you organize local outreach and education activities.

Download one, or e-mail prevention@calib.com, or call 800/394-3366, or write to the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information, 330 C Street, SW, Washington, DC 20447, to request a packet by mail.

*Taken from: Family Support America
E-Newsletter*

FINANCE CORNER

Finance Corner Retention Requirements:

Financial records, supporting documents, statistical records, and all other records pertinent to an award shall be retained for a period of three years from the date of submission of the final expenditure report or, for awards that are renewed quarterly or annually, from the date of submission of the quarterly or annual financial report. The only exceptions are the following:

- (1) If any litigation, claim, financial management review, or audit is started before the expiration of the 3 year period, the records shall be retained until all litigation, claims or audit findings involving the records have been resolved and final action taken.
- (2) Records for real property and equipment acquired with Federal funds shall be retained for 3 years after final disposition.
- (3) When records are transferred to or maintained by the HHS awarding agency, the 3-year retention requirement is not applicable to the recipient.
- (4) Indirect cost rate proposals, cost allocation plans, etc., as specified in Section 74.53(g).

Taken From: 45 CFR 74.53

**The requirement for State and Local Governments is quite similar and can be found at 45 CFR 92.42*

Where is it found in the DD Act?

Answer: Noninterference— Section 125(d)(3).

The *Region VI Developmental Disabilities Newsletter* is issued 6 times a year by the Region VI Administration for Children & Families.

Look for the next Newsletter in June 2003

Anything that we have to learn we learn by the actual doing of it...we become just by performing just acts, temperate by performing temperate ones, brave by performing brave ones.

Aristotle

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address correction requested

highlights..

**ACF Region VI
Developmental Disabilities
Newsletter**